Youth Conference Report-

The Southern PATRIOT

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YOUTH CONFERENCE DELEGATES ASSEMBLE BEFORE THE LIBRARY OF ALLEN UNIVERSITY

"We, As Youth Will Be Vitally Affected . . ."

TO THE PRESIDENT, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, AND THE GOVERNORS OF THOSE STATES WHERE RACIAL SEGREGATION IS ENFORCED BY LAW:

WHEREAS, there are before the Supreme Court of the United States cases involving the constitutionality of enforced segregated education in Delaware, Kansas, South Carolina, Virginia and the District of Columbia, and

WHEREAS, the decision rendered by the Court will have great bearing upon the very existence of democracy within the boundaries of the United States which must stand today as the democratic stronghold in the world, and

WHEREAS, we as youth will be vitally affected by this decision, and

WHEREAS, equal opportunities which are fundamental to a democratic society cannot exist in a segregated system, and

WHEREAS, a segregated system is founded upon undemocratic laws, which are in antithesis to the substance and spirit of our constitution,

WE, 141 delegates coming from 48 colleges and universities in 18 Southern and border states attending an interracial, interdenominational conference convened in Columbia, South Carolina, for the purpose of studying "Youth and Racial Unity Through Educational Opportunity", do hereby petition that you act immediately to eliminate segregation in education.

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This resolution was passed December 31, at the final session of the three-day conference at Allen University and Benedict College which was sponsored by nearly 500 outstanding persons in the South and co-ordinated by the SCEF.

Attendance was widely representative. Besides college students and faculty members, there were businessmen, high-school students, labor and religious leaders.

Delegates were housed in Reid Hall on the Allen campus, with the young men on one floor and the young women on another. Meals were served in a nonsegregated dining room, of course, and to quote the Columbia **State**, "There (was) an air of informality and friendliness about the place."

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"This Is The Frontier of Youth In The South"

Youth Conference

(Continued from Page 1.)

No one could have thought that Columbia was the citadel of James F. Byrnes. It outdid itself in hospitality. The mayor sent regrets that he could not attend the opening session. In his stead, City Councilman Marion A. Park extended official greetings, and Councilman Samuel Rubin was a platform guest. The city's two newspapers, the **Record** and the **State**, were impeccably fair and thorough in their coverage. Radio Stations WIS (NBC) and WMSC (CBS) broadcast transcriptions of the opening session and of interviews with the speakers.

Featured speakers were persons of great stature in the fight for democracy in the South: Dr. J. W. Marshall, president of Wayland Baptist College, an integrated school in Plainview, Tex.; Dr. Herman H. Long, director of the department of race relations, American Missionary Assoc., Fisk University; Dean James Hupp, SCEF board member who initiated racial integration at West Virginia Wesleyan College, and Aubrey Williams, Alabama publisher who is president of SCEF.

Unable to be present, but sending speeches to be read, were Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune, Founder and President Emeritus, Bethune-Cookman College; and Dr. Albert E. Barnett, professor of New Testament at Emory University.

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt and Dr. H. D. Bollinger, chairman of the sponsors, sent greetings.

Panel discussions covered every aspect of racial relations—the school, the home, the church, and in industry.

For further accounts of the conference see Pittsburgh **Courier** of Jan. 10 and "The Future Comes to the South," an article in **The Nation** of Jan 17th by Alfred Maund.

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The following is an excerpt from Dr. Albert E. Barnett's "Statement of Objectives" which was read at the opening session of the conference by Dr. Fred C. James, Dean School of Religion, Allen University.

We are here in this conference because as Americans and heirs of the Judaeo-Christian tradition we believe in the dignity of man under the providence of God, because we believe in democracy and propose its extension and practical application, and because we are confident that men can learn to live together in fraternity and mutual respect.

No totalitarian "ism" explains our motives. We have no allegiance, save allegiance to truth. Our conclusions will be our own, arrived at in the truly American tradition of the free forums of democratic discussion. If we agree to disagree on details, we will, nevertheless, when this conference closes, have faced our problem, not run away from it and this contains the promise of constructive solution.

Rivera Photo

SCENE AT A CONFERENCE DISCUSSION

Dr. H. D. Bollinger, Sec'y. Dept. of College and University Life, Board of Education, Methodist Church, who was attending youth conferences in India, cabled the following message: Thinking of conference. Hope great experience.

* * *

Dr. William Marshall, the keynote speaker, made a profound impression on the young delegates. This is a portion of his address "The Dilemma of Southern Youth":

Many believe that the time has arrived for you young Southern adult Christians to determine on a positive course of action, and to launch out courageously, not necessarily loudly, with the battering ram of your collective influence, to batter down the shameful, anti-Christian wall of segregation. For then, and only then, will we restore the lost prestige of our churches and our democracy in the eyes of a cynical world.

It is fairly simple, isn't it, to state in a few words what SHOULD be. But do not believe for one moment that I minimize the difficulties of your position. You have laws—medieval in their conception—against you. You have cherished, if obsolete, traditions to reckon with. You have—and this is undoubtedly the most trying of all—domestic pressure from beloved Southern kin.

It is not an easy decision to make. It is not an easy course to take. It is, in fact, the frontier of youth in the South, and, like all pioneers, you must be prepared to suffer and to sacrifice.

Cites Own Experience

Our own experience in breaking precedents at Wayland Baptist College, in Texas, has encouraged me to believe that these walls of segregation are not indestructible.

Until six years ago, there had never been a student enrolled at Wayland except white students of Anglo-Saxon descent. I accepted the presidency of Wayland at that time only after outlining to the trustees a plan to educate students of other nations and races so that they might serve as missionaries and help us to make democratic neighbors in the far corners of the earth.

On the campus at Wayland and in the dormitories, students of different nationalities and races became friends. They found it very easy to understand one another, and they learned that there is only one race—the human race! Suspicion, hostility, and dislike were lost in the feeling of brotherhood and good will.

Inevitably, the time arrived when Latin Americans or Orientals would ask an American classmate why there were no Negroes at Wayland College. These questions were referred to me by white

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt wrote:

I regret that I cannot be with you at the conference as the effort you are making for better human relations is important to the world. We have become the symbol of democracy the world over so our actions are watched and what we do at home has a great influence.

My greetings and best wishes to the young people.

students too embarrassed to answer them. Eventually, small groups of thoughtful students would come to me with the same question. I countered with a question of my own: "Would a Negro student be welcome here? REALLY WELCOME?"

Such questions brought about several informal polls. The result of these polls was increasingly encouraging. And finally when the first Negro made application, our faculty voted one hundred per cent for admission. Only eight students of the entire student body opposed.

But what about the Board of Trustees? I feared some opposition there. At a called meeting of the Board, I presented the first application to come from a Negro and said, in effect, "I know what our customs and traditions dictate, but surely to us there are stronger voices—the voice of democracy and the voice of Christianity!" By an overwhelming majority, the Negro was admitted, but not until nearly every member of that Board confessed the internal turmoil with his prejudices. However, nearly every member of the Board had had several of our overseas students as house guests.

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Aubrey Williams served as chairman at the second night's meeting. He warned the delegates of the continuing legal battle that must be waged "even if we are fortunate enough to get a good decision from the Supreme Court." He placed special emphasis on the need for tenure laws to protect the rights of Negro teachers in any merger of schools.

Dr. Herman H. Long was the featured speaker of the evening. Excerpts from his address, "Integration in Education" will be published in our next issue.

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Illness prevented Mrs. Bethune's attendance, but her address, "The Past Is Prologue," was read to the conference by Rudolph Moses, New Orleans businessman and educator who is also a member of the SCEF board. Excerpts will be printed in next issue of the S.P.

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On the final day of the conference, commission reports were presented and discussed. The resolution printed on Page One was discussed and adopted without dissenting vote. Then Dean James Hupp summed up the significance of the conference. He said, in part:

This conference, by its fellowship, good will, and frankness is an example of what spirit might animate the South if the same sensible social rules prevailed as have prevailed here.

Rivera Photo

MEAL TIME AT REID HALL

Plan Newsletter To Report on South

Four Youth Conference delegates are going to publish a monthly newsletter to report on projects and progress on the various campuses in the South and, in general, provide a forum for ideas on integration.

Members of the staff are: Dan Byron Dobbs, U. of Ark.; Carl Schowengert, Central College, Mo.; Darnell McCauley, Livingstone College; and Ivory Lyons, Morehouse College.

Subscriptions—$1—and editorial contributions are being received by McCauley at Livingstone College, Salisbury, N. C. First number in March.

Top row: DR. J. W. MARSHALL, DR. HERMAN H. LONG, DR. ALBERT E. BARNETT, AUBREY WILLIAMS. Bottom row: Conference Chairman, BEN BINKLEY; Commission Chairmen, GRADY DONALD, CARL SCHOWENGERDT, PATRICIA SMATHERS. Not shown, Wiletta Moore, David McMullin.